



IF YOU CRUISE IN PARKS, BATHROOMS OR OTHER SPACES OPEN TO PUBLIC VIEW, TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS, BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS — AND KNOW YOUR RIGHTS. WHILE LAMBDA LEGAL AND OTHER GROUPS ARE FIGHTING AGAINST THE WAYS POLICE TARGET MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN, HAVING SEX WHERE OTHERS MIGHT SEE YOU AND TAKE OFFENSE CAN SUBJECT YOU TO ARREST, PUBLICITY AND OTHER SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES. IF YOU FEEL UNSAFE, YOU SHOULD LEAVE.

CRUISING SAFELY

ALWAYS CARRY IDENTIFICATION IN CASE YOU GET HURT OR ARRESTED.

Providing your ID (driver's license, green card, passport) may decrease your chances of spending time in jail, especially if you don't have a criminal record. If the police stop you, they may instead give you a summons (which tells you the charge and when to appear in court) and let you go.

REMEMBER COPS MAY BE "CRUISING" TOO.

Be aware that undercover cops may be "cruising" to arrest you. A cop doesn't have to tell you he's a cop, even if you ask. If you're cruising for sex and an undercover cop hits on you, what you do can still be a crime. Don't count on proving the cop "entrapped" you (which is difficult). Talk to your lawyer if you think you were set up.

MAKE SURE THAT ANYONE YOU HAVE SEX WITH IS OVER THE AGE OF CONSENT.

Having sex with a minor is a serious crime with heavy punishment.

UNDERSTAND THAT MANY LAWS COULD BE USED AGAINST YOU.

Thanks to a Lambda Legal U.S. Supreme Court win, all laws that banned consensual sex by adults in private, including oral and anal sex, have been struck down. But other laws, like those against sex where you might be seen by others, adultery and prostitution laws, or laws against criminal transmission of HIV — might still be used against you.

BE CAREFUL.

Protect yourself and others against the risk of HIV and other diseases. Be aware of your surroundings and the possibility of being beaten or robbed.

IF YOU CRUISE ON-LINE LET SOMEONE KNOW YOUR PLANS.

Tell them where you're going, the person you are meeting, and when you expect to be back — or write a note on your computer with this information.

IF YOU'RE ARRESTED

STAY CALM.

PROVIDE IDENTIFICATION BUT DON'T ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS WITHOUT A LAWYER.

Anything you say can be used against you.

TRY TO REMEMBER THE DETAILS SURROUNDING THE ARREST, INCLUDING:

- everything you or the officers said or did before, during and after the arrest
- the names, badge numbers and descriptions of any officers who were present
- the details of the physical space, including where you and the officers were
- the names and descriptions of anyone else who was present

ASK TO TALK TO A LAWYER.

Don't make any decisions without talking to a lawyer first. The biggest mistakes you can make are panicking, trying to get it over with quickly by "confessing," trying to talk your way out of the problem, or trying to deal with the police on your own.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, you should talk to a lawyer as soon as possible. A conviction or plea agreement may affect your chances of later becoming a citizen, or put you at risk for deportation.

If you can't afford a lawyer, you may be entitled to a public defender free of charge. Ask to have one appointed before you make any statements to the police or in court — it's your right.

FIND A GOOD LAWYER IF YOU DON'T ALREADY HAVE ONE.

Your lawyer should be a criminal defense attorney, who understands the law and the courts where the arrest occurred.

WRITE EVERYTHING DOWN.

Write down all the details as soon as possible, and share them only with your attorney. Ask your attorney who else it is safe to talk to in confidence.

KNOW YOUR LEGAL OPTIONS.

Make sure you understand the charges and discuss all the possible outcomes with your lawyer, including the consequences of any plea or conviction. These could include:

- a fine
- jail time
- forfeiting property
- having to register as a "sex offender"
- effects on your military or immigration status
- consequences for your employment, licensing or child custody

TELL YOUR LAWYER ABOUT ANY CONFIDENTIAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

Be sure to tell your lawyer whether you have a relationship with anyone who you don't want to find out about your arrest.

ASK YOUR LAWYER QUESTIONS, INCLUDING:

- Is it possible to get the charges dismissed because of conduct by the police?
- Will I have a criminal record? Are there programs to avoid one?
- Could I get my record cleared at some point?
- Will the record be sealed?
- Do I need to take time off from work to go to court?

GET SUPPORT.

It's okay to use anonymous hotlines to ask questions, and talk about your experience. Call Lambda Legal and your local legal or anti-violence group for help and information on finding an attorney.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, the transgendered, and people with HIV or AIDS through impact litigation, education, and public policy work.

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